

STATEMENT OF THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A method for determining the correct escheat state for abandoned property, said method comprising:

starting with an address, interrogating a data base apparatus of property owner addresses, by inputting the address;

comparing the addresses, including street address, city, state, and zip code, to a US Postal Service certified data base apparatus; and

assigning a probable escheat state based on the comparison of street address, city, state, and zip code from the data base of property owner addresses with the US Postal Service certified data base.

2. (original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

assigning a confidence code to the escheat state.

3. (original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

making corrections to property owner addresses based on the comparison.

4. (original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

filtering non-address information from the property owner data base prior to said step of comparing.

5. (original) The method according to claim 4, wherein:
the non-address information includes legal designations of the type of property ownership.
6. (original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising:
assigning at least one alternate escheat state based on the comparison.
7. (original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising:
comparing the address to a list of foreign country names; and
flagging the addresses which include foreign country names that match the list.
8. (original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising:
comparing the addresses to a list of non-state location designations.
9. (original) The method according to claim 3, further comprising:
indicating which addresses were corrected.
10. (original) The method according to claim 9, further comprising:
indicating the type of correction made.

11. (currently amended) The method according to claim 2, wherein:

said confidence code represents 100% of the address from the data base of property owners has an exact match in the US Postal Service certified data base, and

said confidence code is based on a ratio of possible matches when an exact match is not found.

12. (original) The method according to claim 11, further comprising:

correcting the property owner address zip code when city and state are correct but the zip code is incorrect by the comparison.

13. (original) The method according to claim 11, further comprising:

correcting the property owner address state when the city and zip code are correct but the state is incorrect by the comparison.

14. (original) The method according to claim 11, further comprising:

correcting the property owner address state when the zip code is incorrect and the state is ambiguous because the city name exists in more than one state, said step of correcting the property owner address state including a statistical analysis of the number of zip codes for the city in each state having the city.

15. (original) The method according to claim 14, wherein:

the statistical analysis includes comparison to a user selected high threshold.

16. (original) The method according to claim 15, wherein:

the statistical analysis includes comparison to a user selected low threshold.

17. (original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

prior to said step of comparing, filtering the property owner addresses based on user supplied suppression data.

18. (original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

indicating how the probable escheat state was assigned.

19. (original) The method according to claim 2, further comprising:

generating a report that defines the composition of the abandoned property database and summarizes metrics by the confidence code.

20. (original) The method according to claim 1, wherein:

said method is performed with a computer coupled to the Internet.

21. (new) An apparatus for determining the correct escheat state for abandoned property, said apparatus comprising:

- a data base server including means for comparing an uploaded address to a list of addresses stored in a data base;

- a network server coupled to said data base server;

- a network coupled to the network server;

- a remote terminal coupled to the network, said terminal including means for uploading an address to said data base server via said network and said network server;

and

- a printer coupled to said terminal, wherein

- said terminal uploads an address to said data base server, said data base server compares the uploaded addresses to addresses in the data base and downloads the result of the comparison to said terminal, the results of the comparison being output by said terminal to said printer.